

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of inhibiting the generation of ceramide from sphingomyelin comprising the step of
5 administering a pharmacologically effective dose of basic fibroblast growth factor to an animal in need of such treatment.

sub C'
Sub 31
10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said animal is a human.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said basic fibroblast growth factor is administered in a daily amount of from about 0.1 mg/kg to about 100 mg/kg.

sub A1
15 4. A method of treating a pathophysiological state characterized by endothelial apoptosis, comprising the administration of a pharmacologically effective dose of a basic fibroblast growth factor to said animal.

20 5. The method of claim 4, wherein said pathophysiological state is selected from the group selected from sepsis, radiation damage, autoimmune disease and acute respiratory distress.

Sub 31
25 6. The method of claim 4, wherein said animal is a human.

Sub 21 7. The method of claim 4, wherein said basic fibroblast growth factor is administered in a daily amount of from about 0.1 mg/kg to about 100 mg/kg.

5 8. A method of treating sepsis in an individual, comprising the administration of a pharmacologically effective dose of a basic fibroblast growth factor to said individual.

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10 9. The method of claim 8, wherein said basic fibroblast growth factor is administered in a daily amount of from about 0.1 mg/kg to about 100 mg/kg.

Sub 22
15 10. A method of treating an individual at risk for sepsis, comprising the step of administering to said individual a pharmacologically effective dose of a basic fibroblast growth factor.